GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LABOUR
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2708
ANSWERED ON:09.08.2000
RECOGNITION OF INFORMAL SECTOR
SAHIB SINGH VERMA

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the details of recommendations of International Labour Organization (ILO) regarding Informal Sector Employment in India;

(b) the percentage of labour in Informal Sector in Metropolitan Cities namely Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Calcutta, Bangalore, Ahmedabad and Kanpur etc.;

(c) whether the Government propose to recognise and formalise labour forces to improve the economy of the country; and

(d) if so, the steps the Government propose to take in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MUNI LALL)

(a): A national workshop on the strategic approach to job creation in the urban informal sector was jointly organised by the ILO, Ministry of Labour and the Institute of Labour Development in February, 2000 in which it was concluded that decent work conditions in the informal sector can be achieved in India by enforcing minimum labour standards, promoting enterprise and entrepreneurship development and imparting skill training. The Conference also concluded that with an appropriate policy, it shoud be possible to provide social protection to many more workers in the informal economy compared to today and organisation of workers in the informal sector can create the conditions for lending a voice to workers in the informal economy.

(b): These figures are not maintained separately for metropolitan cities.

(c) & (d): Workers both in the formal and informal sectors in India, enjoy the right to form associations and bargain for their wages and rights through laws and regulations. Workers can register their associations under the Trade Unions Act, 1926 of India. However, most of the workers in the informal sector remain unorganised for various reasons such as seasonal nature of their work, fragmentation of the activities, lack of awareness and inadequate unionisation. Recently trade unions are increasingly taking steps to make their organisations more relevant and responsive to the informal sector. There are, however, no legal restrictions on their unionisation.